

February 6, 2002

Dear Peggy,

Thank you for taking some time today to talk with me about FEC voting standards for implementing new electronic voting machines. As we discussed, there is currently no stated standard, which ensures citizens can verify that their vote is electronically recorded for the candidates they actually chose. Many of my fellow citizens and I believe that such a standard is absolutely mandatory to protect the Constitutional rights of the citizens as well as to preserve open, honest and free elections in America.

In addition, it appears that such a standard cannot currently be satisfied by the vast majority of voting machines that the FEC has certified. As a computer consultant with over 30 years of experience, I know that electronic voting machines can easily be programmed to distort voting results and still go undetected in pre-election tests or certifications. For example, voting machines can be programmed to:

- Distort vote counting after a certain number of ballots are counted;
- Distort vote counting on certain days;
- Distort vote counting after a vote is received for a certain abnormal combination of candidates;
- Distort vote counting after receiving a signal via a modem that is used to transfer results;
- Distort vote counting as results are transferred from a precinct to a central tabulation machine;

I believe your description of "shell" system software supplied by the voting machine vendor with separate candidate, race and referendum data, exclusively managed by the customers, is very good to prevent this type of corruption. However, there is no current FEC requirement imposed on the vendor to ensure that the "shell" system software architecture is implemented. I believe that this requirement should be incorporated into the new FEC standards that are being drafted.

But even the "shell" system software does not allow the voter to verify that their vote has been electronically recorded for the candidates that they chose. A simple audit trail that could be implemented to provide the citizens with the naturally expected ability to verify their vote would work like this:

- A unique sequentially generated number should be assigned to each electronically recorded ballot by the voting machine;
- As a ballot is completed, the number can either be displayed or printed for voters, who can choose to write the number down, memorize it or take the receipt showing the number with them;
- When the polls close, the machines should print the votes of all ballots ordered by the unique ballot identification number and totaled for public posting at the precinct;
- Once poll workers have publicly posted detail precinct results, voters could briefly view the results and match their number against the detail to verify that the machine correctly recorded the vote;

In this manner, the identity of the voter is still private, no one knows how any individual voted and the voter has the assurance that the vote was recorded correctly. I am formally requesting that this audit trail be included as part of the revised FEC standards that are currently being drafted.

Regardless of the machine, vendor or particular audit trail, I believe that the principal of a verifiable vote count must be upheld for each citizen. If there are other specific alternatives that allow the voter to verify that their vote is electronically recorded for the candidates they actually chose, please inform me of the details. My phone number is (770) 993-3622 and my Email address is garlandf@msn.com. Because of the critical nature of this subject matter, I request the favor of a written reply via Email or postal service. Thank you again for your time, consideration and efforts to improve voting in America.

Sincerely,

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